



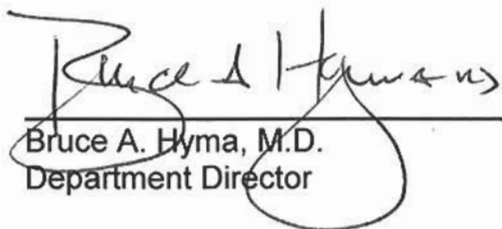
Departmental Business Plan and Outlook

Department Name: Medical Examiner

**Fiscal Years:
2005-2006
&
2006-2007**

Plan Date: December 9, 2005

Approved by:



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Overview

Goals (Public Safety)

► Effectively provide the necessary and appropriate technology, buildings, equipment and people for delivery of quality services now and in the future.

► Provide comprehensive and humane programs for crime prevention, treatment and rehabilitation.

► Improve the quality of service delivery through commitment to ongoing employee training.

► Strengthen the bond between the public safety departments and the community.

► Improve public safety through the use of community planning and the enforcement of quality of life issues.

Outcomes

Charts

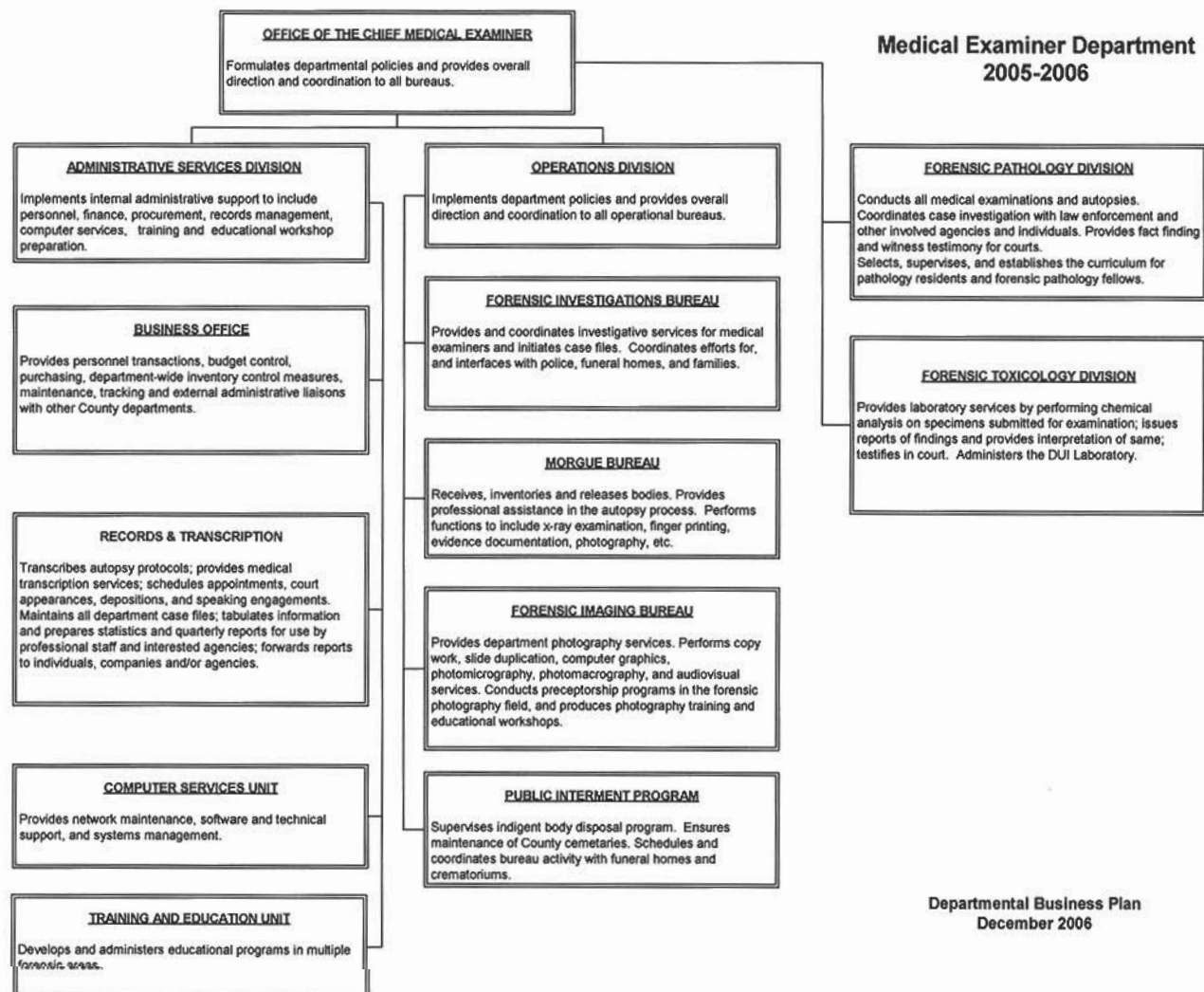
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Medical Examiner Department exists to provide statutorily mandated medicolegal death investigative services for the citizens of Miami-Dade County. The work of the department focuses on what is generally termed "forensic pathology." This field of study combines the efforts of legal and law enforcement investigations with those of medicine and science to ascertain the facts surrounding deaths particularly the cause and manner of death, as defined in Florida Statute Chapter 406. Forensic medical and toxicological consultation services, education, and research further define the department's mission. Additionally, the department directs the County's Public Interment Program and serves as the project manager for contractual DUI (Driving Under the Influence) laboratory services.

The department interrelates with many local, state and federal agencies, including the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), State Attorney's and Public Defender's Offices, Life Alliance Organ Procurement, University of Miami Bone and Tissue Bank, Florida Lions Eye Bank, law enforcement departments, medical offices and hospitals, funeral homes, and the media. The Medical Examiner Department currently has seventy (70) full-time and two (2) part-time employees in its various bureaus, which include: administration, business office, computer services, pathology, toxicology, records/transcription, morgue, photography, investigations, and public interment.

Table of Organization



Summary of major programs, initiatives or milestones to be achieved in the current and next fiscal year.

- ▶ Complete CME Medical Examiner data base software implementation – web enabled, 24-hour Medical Examiner information access for law enforcement, criminal justice and legal communities.
- ▶ Acquisition of instruments in Toxicology and Forensic Imaging Laboratories and other mission critical capital items.
- ▶ Update Mass Casualty Preparedness.
- ▶ Development of a Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS), a component of the VertiQ Medical Examiner data base software, in order to provide efficient access of toxicology data to law enforcement, criminal justice and legal communities.
- ▶ Obtain accreditation by the American Board of Forensic Toxicology Laboratories.
- ▶ Complete transition to digital imaging technology in the Forensic Imaging Laboratory.
- ▶ Renew reaccreditation by the American Council for Graduate Medical Education for the department's Forensic Pathology Fellowship Program.
- ▶ Complete certification process for Medicolegal Death Investigators.
- ▶ Initiate General Obligation Bond departmental improvement projects.

Summary of significant factors critical to the Department's successful implementation of the business plan.

- ▶ Acquisition of sufficient Capital Outlay Reserve Fund (CORF) dollars for mission critical, departmental capital expenditures.
- ▶ Procurement of Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) funding through the Office of Emergency Management.
- ▶ LIMS development is a key component critical to accreditation by the American Board of Forensic Toxicology Laboratories.
- ▶ Information Technology backup support, Off-site data backup and warehousing, enhanced fiber optic connection to County network.

INTRODUCTION

Department Purpose/Mission Statement

The mission of the Medical Examiner Department is to provide accurate, timely, dignified, compassionate and professional death investigative services for the citizens of Miami-Dade County, together with education, consultation and research for local and national medical, legal, academic and law enforcement communities.

Department Description

- ▶ In the early 20th century, elected peace justices held inquests following deaths.
- ▶ Post WW II, the need for a medical examiner system in Miami-Dade County was recognized.
- ▶ Sheriff Thomas Kelly and Mrs. Claire Weintraub, a local resident active in civic affairs, worked to establish the first full-time medical examiner who would be a county employee, and an office that would operate within county government.
- ▶ March 16, 1956 – The Miami-Dade Medical Examiner Department was established with Dr. Stanley Durlacher, as the County's first Medical Examiner.
- ▶ Serving as the first Assistant Medical Examiner, Dr. Joseph H. Davis would succeed to the Chief Medical Examiner position less than a year later after Dr. Durlacher's death in February 1957 and continued to serve for four decades until his retirement in 1996.
- ▶ In 1970, Florida Statute, Chapter 406 was enacted, defining the duties and responsibilities of the Medical Examiner.
- ▶ The department was headquartered in three different locations in proximity to Jackson Memorial Hospital, before arriving at its present location at Number One on Bob Hope Road (1851 NW 10th Avenue).
- ▶ The present facility, the "Joseph H. Davis Center for Forensic Pathology," opened in April 1988. It encompasses 89,500 square feet, and was constructed at a cost of \$10.2 million.
- ▶ In 1996, Dr. Roger E. Mittleman succeeded to the position of Chief Medical Examiner and guided the department through one of its more serious challenges – the crash of ValuJet Flight #592 on May 11, 1996.
- ▶ In 2001 Dr. Bruce A. Hyma was appointed as the Chief Medical Examiner and continues to serve, assisted by more than sixty other persons, including pathologists, photographers, investigators, toxicologists, and a records and morgue bureau staff.

Present and Anticipated New Services:

► The department's major duties and responsibilities are mandated by Florida Statute, Chapter 406 and State Administrative Code, 11-G.

► Pursuant to the Statute, the department annually investigates approximately 3,200 deaths, which includes the performance of approximately 2,400 autopsies. The department is prepared to serve Miami-Dade County residents in the event of disasters resulting in mass casualties and is recognized throughout the United States as a leader in the field of forensic pathology.

► The continued development of the CME software will allow more efficient access and integration of Medical Examiner information and will provide more timely information reporting required at local and state levels. This development includes the LIMS, critical to the toxicology laboratory.

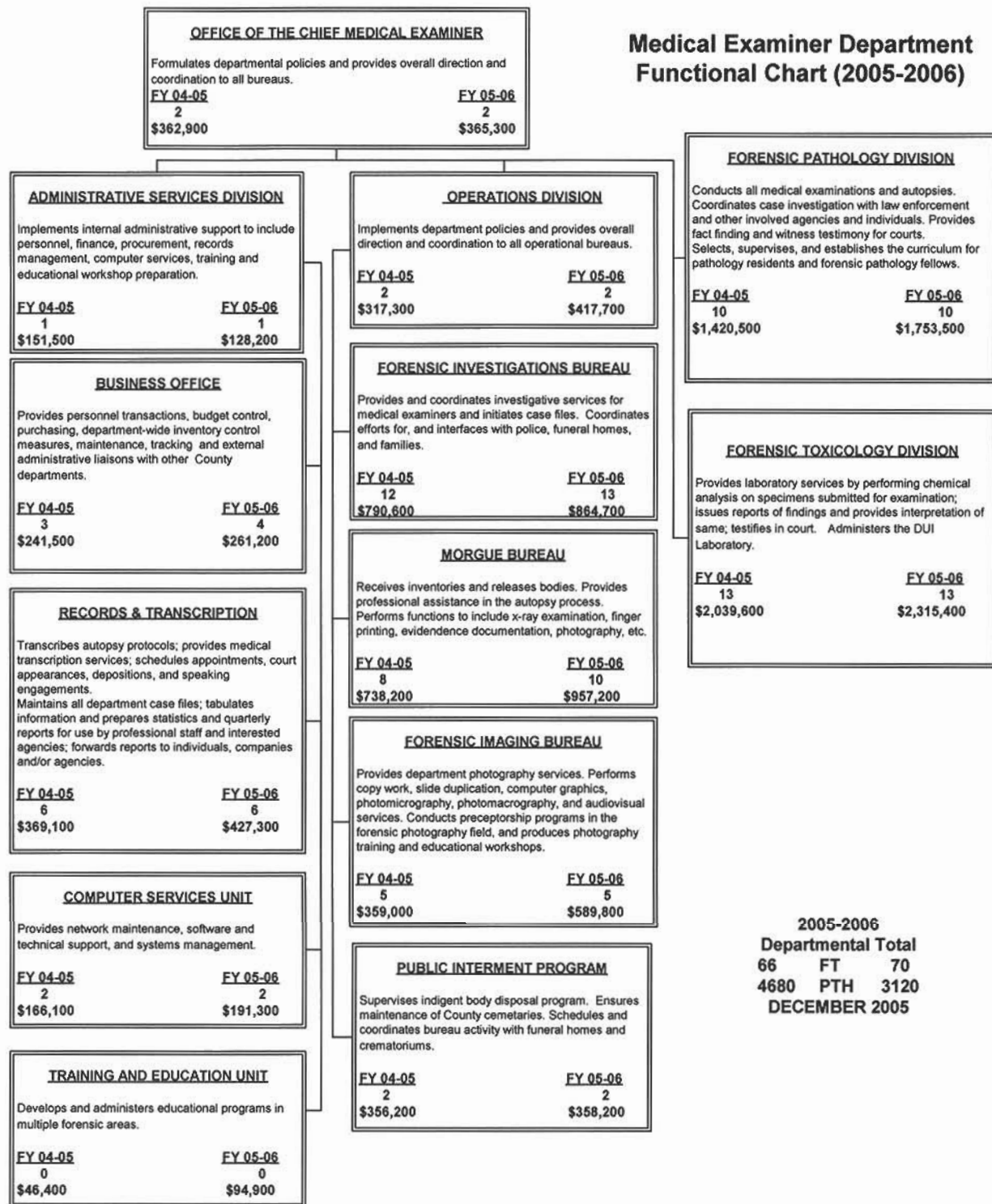
► Administrative Oversight of the DUI laboratory services of the University of Miami will continue.

► Cooperation with Federal agencies (Federal Bureau of Investigations, Immigration Custom Enforcement, Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms, Food and Drug Administration), will be enhanced by conversion to digital photographic technology from conventional film.

► The Department hosts annual seminars in Death Investigation, Forensic Imaging, Forensic Nursing, Forensic Odontology and Forensic Anthropology.

► The Department provides forensic toxicology services for neighboring Medical Examiner Districts and the Caribbean.

Organization and Staffing



Discussion of major programs and changes in staffing levels and organization from the prior year focused on the performance impacts of these changes

- ▶ Transition from conventional photographic film to digital technology for evidence documentation by the Forensic Imaging Bureau will provide timely and efficient access to photographic evidence.
- ▶ Procurement of Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) grant funding through Office of Emergency Management supports the department's ongoing mass casualty preparedness initiatives.
- ▶ The Department added a full-time Forensic Technician position and a full-time Forensic Investigator position to provide extended service hours to funeral homes and families. Additionally, a part-time Forensic Technician position was converted to full-time.
- ▶ A Clerk-4 overage position was converted to full-time in order to effectively handle accounts receivable, billing and collections, inventory control and file maintenance in the Business Office.

Staffing Levels

Functional Unit	FY 04/05 Budget (Prior Year)	FY 05/06 Budget (Current Year)
Office of Chief Medical Examiner	2	2
Administrative Service Division	1	1
Business Office	3	4
Records/Transcription	6	6
Computer Services	2	2
Operations Division	2	2
Forensic Investigations	12	13
Morgue	8	10
Forensic Imaging/Asset Sharing	5	5
Public Interment Program	2	2
Forensic Pathology Division	10	10
Forensic Toxicology Division/DUI	13	13
Total	66	70

Fiscal Environment

Revenues and Expenditures by Fund

(All Dollars in Thousands)

	Prior Fiscal Year 04/05 Actual	Current Fiscal Year 05/06 Budget	Projection as of December 9, 2005
Revenues			
Gen. Fund	6,587	7,764	7,764
Spec. Serv	881	950	950
Carryover	84	0	146
..			
Total	7,552	8,714	8,860
Expense			
Personnel	5,525	6,396	6,411
Operating	1,821	2,210	2,230
Capital	59	108	239
Total	7,405	8,714	8,860

Equity in pooled cash (for proprietary funds only)

Fund/ Subfund	Prior FY __ Beginning Year Actual	Prior FY __ Year- end Actual (Est.)	Current FY __ Year-end Budget
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total			

The major source of funding for the Medical Examiner Department in FY04/05 was the General Fund with an allocated total of \$6,587,000. Additional funding came from United States Treasury/Department of Justice Asset Sharing Trust fund in the amount of \$39,000 and Trust Fund Retained Earnings in the amount of \$89,000. (This amount has been significantly decreased in recent years and funding is not expected to increase in this area.) Miscellaneous funds generated by various activities, such as expert testimony charges, cremation approval fees, and photographic and laboratory testing services conducted by the Department total \$881,000.

The Department provides the following in-kind services:

- ▶ Cooperates with Life Alliance (Organ Procurement), the University of Miami Bone and Tissue Bank, and the Florida Lions Eye Bank.
- ▶ Provides consultation services for the local medical community on their Death Reporting and Death Certification responsibilities.
- ▶ Provides consultation services for various County, State and Federal agencies and foreign governments.
- ▶ Provides substance abuse information for local schools and universities.
- ▶ Provides information on drug abuse trends for community and state organizations.
- ▶ Hosts criminal justice students in forensic imaging.
- ▶ Assists with training of County employees from law enforcement and Fire Rescue.
- ▶ Provides instruction in the pathology curriculum at the University of Miami Medical School.

- ▶ Participates in the Trauma Advisory Committee and Criminal Justice Council, and the Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team.
- ▶ Cooperates with the William Lehman Crash Study Institute in medical examiner traffic fatality data acquisition.
- ▶ Participates in University of Miami medical research protocols, when applicable and appropriate.
- ▶ Provides laboratory services for the United States Army Trauma Training Center (ATTC).

Business Environment

The Medical Examiner Department's responsibilities are statutorily mandated as defined in Chapter 406, Florida Statutes and Chapter 11G of the Florida Administrative Code.

The area of forensic toxicology services is a competitive environment with private and public sectors competing for contracts. The Department's Toxicology Laboratory has participated in the competitive bid process for laboratory services for other Medical Examiner jurisdictions and has been successful in being awarded contracts with other counties. Such bids have been competitive with the private sector. Maintaining a competitive edge has been challenged by rising costs of petroleum based products together with the personnel and operational limitations of the toxicology laboratory.

Customer Feedback Plan

- ▶ Regular meetings are held with County law enforcement officials to discuss matters of mutual concern and interest.
- ▶ Feedback is received and corrective measures, if necessary, are implemented.
- ▶ Input and feedback from the local funeral industry is welcomed or solicited when needed.
- ▶ Office staff daily interface with grieving families sensitively and compassionately.

Critical Success Factors

- ▶ Acquisition of sufficient C.O.R.F. dollars to maintain and upgrade laboratory instruments, photographic equipment, computer hardware/software and other mission critical capital items.
- ▶ Data backup capabilities, off-site data warehousing, enhanced fiber optic connection.
- ▶ Continuing education and training for departmental staff.
- ▶ Development of the Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS).

Future Outlook

- ▶ Host the American Academy of Forensic Sciences (AAFS) Annual Meeting in the next five years.
- ▶ Achieve accreditation by the American Board of Forensic Toxicology Laboratories.
- ▶ Acquire funding for a forensic nursing pilot program.
- ▶ Host the National Association of Medical Examiner (NAME) Annual Meeting in the next five years.
- ▶ Become a web host for Statewide Medical Examiner Data Management.
- ▶ Continue disaster/mass casualty preparedness training for Medical Examiner staff.
- ▶ Prepare department for Sterling Challenge.

THE PLAN

Overview

Our FY 2005/06 – 2006-07 business plan draws heavily on previously adopted work including the Miami-Dade County Strategic Plan. Miami-Dade County's Strategic Planning initiative is both a plan and a process. The plan provides a framework at a broad Countywide level where we want to go, how we get there, and how we measure our progress along the way. The process ensures increased communications at all levels of County government using consistent terms.

- Our Countywide *Vision of "delivering excellence every day"* communicates the community's shared vision for the best possible future for Miami-Dade County government.
- Our Countywide *Mission* statement communicates the role of our government. Miami-Dade County's mission statement is *"delivering excellent public services that address our community's needs and enhance our quality of life"*.
- Our *Guiding Principles* communicate to all levels of our organization the manner in which we expect all decisions, interactions and activities to be performed.
- Our *Strategic Themes* represent what we consider to be the most significant challenges and opportunities facing Miami-Dade County government.
- We have developed *Goals* across all County Departments. These goals provide the direction the County must move in to address the priority strategic themes and help guide us towards the desired future.
- For each goal we have defined a desired *Outcome* or set of outcomes that the County must achieve to be successful in accomplishing the goal. These outcomes are from the customer/community perspective (e.g. quality of service provided, customer satisfaction).
- For each outcome(s), implementing *Strategies* summarize at a broad countywide level the actions that will be taken to achieve the outcome(s).
- *Key Performance Indicators* are the measures that express the County's intentions from the Strategic Plan. Associated *Key Performance Objectives* assign measurable targets and timelines to the key performance indicators while the *Performance Measure* is the specific unit of measure. Departments may develop *Additional Performance Objectives*.
- *Department Programs/Initiatives (may include activities and tasks)* are actions or groups of actions that will be undertaken by a particular department in a specific fiscal year in order to implement a strategy.

As part of the County's Strategic Plan, the Board of County Commissioners endorsed nine priority strategic themes countywide. This Department is primarily supportive of the following strategic themes:

- *Insert your first theme here*
- *Followed by other themes that your department supports*

Supporting these themes are supporting goals and priority outcomes that directly relate to this department. These are provided along with the Department's Programs, Initiatives, and Performance Measures for fiscal year 2006.

Department-related Strategic Plan Goals:

- *Insert your first strategic plan goal here*
- *Followed by other strategic plan goals that your department supports*
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Department-related Strategic Plan Priority Outcomes:

- *Insert your first strategic plan priority outcome here*
- *Followed by other strategic plan priority outcomes that your department supports*
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